



Illustration by Jeanne R. Janish,
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SPOROBOLUS NEGLECTUS **SMALL DROPSEED**

Small Dropseed is an annual grass with tufted, wiry, ascending stems that are 10-40 cm tall. Its leaves have flat to inrolled blades that are 1-2 mm wide. Sheaths enfold the stem only at the base, and have long hairs along their margins and at the junction with the blade. The ligule is 0.5 mm long. Tiny, short-stalked, tightly erect spikelets are borne in a cylindrical inflorescence that is 1-3 cm long and enclosed in the leaf sheaths along the length of the stem as well as the top. Each egg shaped spikelet has 1 flower that is ca. 2 mm long and consisting of two equal-length glumes enclosing a lemma and a palea of longer but ca. equal length. Mature fruit in August-September.

SPOROBOLUS VAGINIFLORUS is similar but has glumes greater than 2.5 mm long; it has been collected only once in Montana and was likely adventive. Our other members of this genus are perennials with terminal inflorescences only.